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Robert Cardillo, Director
National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
7500 GEOINT Drive
Springfield, Virginia 22150-7500

Director Cardillo:

As the Agency's public comment period comes to a close, I write to again thank you for selecting St. Louis as the Agency Preferred Alternative (APA) for the new headquarters of NGA West.

I also write today to clarify some misinformation included in recent communications from the supporters of the location in Southern Illinois. While I certainly understand the enthusiasm behind their efforts in support of the Southern Illinois location, I do not believe it is helpful or fair to allow incorrect information to be communicated to the public and to your office about our location or your selection process.

NGA Mission for the Future

As we know, the mission of the NGA is adapting to meet our country's future national security needs, and when looking at NGA's mission, it must be considered in its entirety. While the Department of Defense and support to military operations is a critical element, NGA's mission also includes the broader National Security Community. This includes elements like the National Command Authority (i.e., President, NSC), the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Central Intelligence Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Secret Service, and other agencies.

Supporters of the Illinois project continue to point to the prevailing logistics and transportation skill sets of the Scott Air Force Base workforce. While these skills are certainly important and critical to the work at Scott AFB, the future needs of NGA will require more than security clearance.

A large portion of the mission at Scott AFB, including U.S. Transportation Command and the Air Mobility Command, is logistics-oriented, which is not a key NGA need. In other areas of expertise, such as analysts, NGA has effectively hired those leaving military service since its inception in St. Louis more than seventy years ago.

To support its critical mission in the future requires NGA to recruit a diverse set of talent from across the entire country. This includes various skill sets from across academia, at the undergraduate and graduate levels, as well as those leaving the military. To stay ahead of our adversaries, this future workforce must be willing to embrace open, commercial, cutting-edge technological advances.

The North St. Louis Site best provides this needed environment with growing numbers of new high-tech commercial startups along Washington Avenue and in the Cortex Innovation District, and our leading-edge research universities, including Washington University, Saint Louis University and Webster University.

On a related and peculiar note, in its recent letter to you, the Illinois delegation stated that Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville “is the only college or university in the region offering a degree in cartography or geography”. Saint Louis University (SLU) has an outstanding Geographic Information Science program, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, to which NGA has sent students. Additionally, one of SLU’s professors, Dr. Wulamu, is the current President for the Heartland Region of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS). ASPRS is a professional society for the core sciences (photogrammetry, geodesy & geophysics, images science, GIS, etc.) that underpin the GEOINT discipline and the Heartland Region covers a large portion of the Midwest, extending from southwestern Illinois up through North Dakota.

Additionally, there are a number of top tier universities in St. Louis that have programs in Cyber Security, including Washington University, Saint Louis University and Webster University. Also, Saint Louis University has a program in Security and Strategic Intelligence. All of these support the NGA workforce and mission.

Security

Security of the NGA West headquarters is of utmost importance. Unfortunately, the supporters of the Southern Illinois locations have repeatedly criticized the North St. Louis location, basing their thought process from a dated Department of Defense operations perspective. NGA is not a combat operational function, but rather, a combat-support function. Mitigating encroachment is much more important when you are considering the impact of military operations of weapon systems or platforms that affect the environment or in which the environment impacts or restricts operations. This is far less applicable to NGA.

The physical security of the campus and its employees has been addressed. The letter sent to you by the Illinois Congressional delegation letter references standoff distances / force protection standards, specifically UFC 4-010-01 dated January 22, 2007. However, the most recent standards are October 10, 2013. Based upon our meetings with the NGA security officials, we are confident the North St. Louis site can meet standoff and force protection distance of 500 feet around key structures. We will continue to work closely with NGA to accommodate any additional security requirements.

Environmental

Supporters of the Southern Illinois location have alleged the North St. Louis location does not meet the NGA's stated space requirements. They have also been critical of areas adjacent to the location that are not part of the footprint of North St. Louis site.

Though originally included in the proposed footprint of the North St. Louis site, USACE decided the former Pruitt Igoe site was not required to meet the needs of the NGA. The Pruitt Igoe site was removed from the proposed NGA site well before the issuance of the draft EIS in October 2015. The Pruitt Igoe site was removed by the NGA, because the mission requirements could be met on the smaller site to the north of Cass Avenue. Environmental concerns at the Pruitt Igoe site were not a factor in the decision to remove Pruitt Igoe from the NGA site.

Supporters of the Southern Illinois location have repeatedly promoted the unproven claim that the Pruitt Igoe site may contain radioactive waste. The Pruitt Igoe site has been tested numerous times over the years for soil and groundwater contaminants; a minimum of 20 studies -- including environmental assessments, feasibility studies, and engineering studies -- have been completed at the site. None of this testing has indicated any sign of radioactive or nuclear contaminants on the Pruitt Igoe site or surrounding area. Ms. Lisa Martino-Taylor's dissertation implied the use of radioactive material in testing. None of the allegations made in Ms. Martino-Taylor's dissertation were substantiated. The Department of Defense responses in historical documents indicate only non-harmful levels of zinc cadmium sulfide were used.

The City of St. Louis has been very forthcoming with the information and process for environmental testing for the site. Despite the claims of the Illinois delegation, there has never been a lack of transparency in this process. Both the Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments were provided to USACE and are included in the FEIS as Appendix 3.6B and 3.6C, respectively. The City of St. Louis and State of Missouri have united around this project. The St. Louis City NGA site was accepted into the MO Brownfield Voluntary Cleanup Program in October 2015 to ensure MDNR oversight occurs throughout the duration of the project. The City of St. Louis has conducted sufficient environmental investigations to estimate remediation costs and is confident that all environmental conditions have been identified. The state is similarly confident of the City's efforts and has approved the Remedial Management Plan and authorized up to \$36 million in Brownfield Remediation Tax Credits to fund the remediation.

The Illinois delegation implied in a recent letter to you that there is a risk to the development schedule involved in taking possession of the North St. Louis parcel of land. The City of St. Louis has all properties within the proposed North St. Louis City site currently under City control, awaiting the record of decision. The schedule to provide the site to meet the NGA's requirements has been confirmed. We are ready, willing and able to provide the site to meet the schedule discussed at length with USACE and NGA.

In making many of these claims, supporters of the Southern Illinois location have

repeatedly cited "an independent analysis conducted by Command Consulting Group." We believe that "independent" analysis conducted by the command consulting group is anything but "independent" as it was funded by the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois and should be taken in the context of a paid opinion.

We are confident that your decision to name North St. Louis as the APA came after much deliberation, research, and thought about the current and future mission of NGA. We believe that a studious review of the facts will again show that St. Louis is the best location to meet the mission of the NGA and appreciate the confidence you have place in St. Louis as your partner for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Otis Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Otis" and last name "Williams" clearly distinguishable.

Otis Williams,
Executive Director